



USS COLE Memorial

The Navy held a ceremony Oct. 12, 2001 to dedicate a memorial in honor of those Sailors who lost their lives in the terrorist attack on USS COLE.

The USS COLE Memorial is located near Vista Point at Naval Station Norfolk. The memorial is the result of contributions from thousands of private individuals and businesses across the country. The design began as a vision of USS COLE crew members who joined with LANTDIV architect John Blackburn and the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society to bring life to their vision for honoring their fallen shipmates and their courageous ship.

Blackburn's design incorporates 17 rectangular stones surround the base, representing the 17 Sailors killed in the attack. The stones are flat on the ground representing the lives that were cut short. The dark paving stones represent the dark days following the attack, their circular pattern, the waves of the sea. The three sections of the main stone represent the three colors of the American flag that flew over the ship. The stone is cut at a 45-degree angle representing the angle formed during a military salute. The monument salutes Atlantic Fleet ships entering and leaving Norfolk. In the landscaping, there are 26 Japanese Pine Trees, one tree for each Sailor killed and one for each of the eleven children they left behind.

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society managed public donations to the COLE Memorial Fund and administering the construction plans and the contract. The Resident Officer in Charge of Construction Sewells Point managed construction of the monument.

Seventeen Sailors were killed in the Oct. 12, 2000 terrorist attack on USS COLE while the ship was refueling in the port of Aden, Yemen.